

UNDERSTAND ME! MOM, DAD, TEACHER



***Workshop outline for institutions employing psychologists and
educators working with LGBT+ people***



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Main objective of the workshop:

Improving recruitment processes and enhancing the professional competence of psychologists and educators working with LGBT+ people.

Specific objectives:

- Creating a respectful and empathetic space where everyone feels accepted.
- Developing skills to communicate effectively and respond to discrimination.
- Improve interviewing methods and conflict intervention.
- Strengthening interpersonal and ethical competences, resulting in a better quality of educational and therapeutic support.

Training methods:

- Interactive lectures
- Group discussions and brainstorming
- Practical exercises (case studies, simulations, role-playing)
- Analysis of teaching materials

Materials: Multimedia presentations, case studies, worksheets, survey forms (initial, evaluation, application, attendance list).

Results:

- Improving the effectiveness of pre- and post-discrimination interventions.
- Building an organisational culture based on equality and mutual support.
- Increase staff engagement and improve the quality of support provided to LGBT+ people.

Duration: 6 hours (including breaks)

Venue: A training room equipped with an overhead projector, with access to daylight and suitable for people with disabilities.

Proceedings of the Workshop (15 min)



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Welcome: Introduction of the trainer and discussion of the aims and objectives of the workshop (General Information section).

Integration exercise - "Two Truths and a Lie": Each participant first says his/her name and then makes three statements about him/herself (two true, one false) and the rest of the group guesses which is false.

This exercise is not just fun, but a thoughtful way of breaking down initial uncertainty and tension among the participants. First, everyone introduces his or her name and then tells three interesting facts about him or herself - two of which are true and one is fictional. Thanks to this procedure, each participant has the opportunity not only to learn the names of his or her colleagues, but also to hear interesting, often non-obvious information that helps build a broader picture of each person's personality.

The process is highly inclusive. By sharing personal information, participants show their openness, which builds trust and fosters authentic communication. Everyone who listens has to pay close attention to what is being said, which further engages the team in a shared conversation. This interaction naturally brings people together, making it easier to move on to the more demanding parts of the training, as a foundation of mutual acceptance and cooperation has been built from the outset.

Moreover, the light-hearted, playful nature of the exercise contributes to creating a friendly atmosphere in which everyone feels comfortable. Participants begin to perceive the group as a community, where openness and mutual respect are the norm, which is crucial for further, more intense discussions or simulations. Through this exercise, not only do they get to know each other, but they also develop the ability to actively listen and empathise with each other's perspective, which forms the basis for effective collaboration and successful communication throughout the organisation.

Setting the workshop rules: The facilitators, together with the group, set the rules during the workshop by writing them on the board/flipchart. Participants propose their rules.

Example of workshop principles:

- mute telephones
- when someone is talking, we do not interrupt
- everyone has the right to their own opinion
- we are frank and open
- we do not judge or criticise others
- we are active and committed.



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The facilitator asks participants to complete a pre-test questionnaire exploring their level of knowledge in the area of working with LGBT+ people (Appendix 1).

1 General overview - Introduction to the topic of LGBT+ (30 min)

Moderated Discussion / Brainstorming

The facilitator asks what LGBT+ stands for. A discussion moderated by the facilitator begins. Participants respond, the facilitator guides the discussion to answer the question of who an LGBT+ person is. After the discussion, the facilitator gives a mini lecture on the meaning of the acronym LGBT+ and the history.

Objective: To stimulate open discussion, exchange of experiences and views.

Mini Lecture: The History and Meaning of the Abbreviation LGBT+

Expanding the LGBT+ acronym:

- **L (lesbian):** Women experiencing attraction to other women.
- **G (gay):** Men who feel attracted to people of the same sex.
- **B (bisexual):** Persons interested in both men and women.
- **T (transgender):** People whose gender identity does not match the one assigned at birth.
- **+ (plus):** Other identities, e.g. the following letters can be found after +:

- Q stands for queer people, i.e. those who do not find themselves in the traditional categories of gender or sexual orientation.

- A stands for asexual people, i.e. those who do not feel the need to enter into close sexual or romantic relationships.

History: a brief overview of the evolution of the terminology and how social movements have influenced it.

History of LGBT+ Abbreviation

1. origins (1960-1970):

- In the 1960s and 1970s, the civil rights and feminist movements influenced the beginning of the struggle for homosexual rights. Originally, the term 'homosexual' was used to describe these communities.

2 LGB (1980):

- In the 1980s, the terms 'lesbian' and 'gay' were introduced as more accepted and positive terms. Alongside this, the abbreviation LGB began to be used to include bisexual people.

3. LGBT (1990):

- In the 1990s, the letter 'T' was added to the abbreviation to include transgender people. This was an important change that reflected the growing awareness and acceptance of different gender identities.

4. LGBT+ (2000 and beyond):

- As public awareness and acceptance of the diversity of sexual and gender identities has grown, the acronym LGBT has been expanded with the '+' symbol to include a broader spectrum of identities such as queer, intersex, asexuality, pansexuality, agender, genderqueer, non-binary and others.

The history and definition of the acronym LGBT+ shows how society has evolved in its attitudes towards sexual and gender diversity. It is an important element in building self-awareness and acceptance, which is key to creating a fair and equal society.

Practical Exercise: Case Study in Groups

Instructions: Divide into small teams, where each group analyses a description of a discriminatory situation (e.g. inappropriate questions during a job interview) and discusses possible interventions.

Aim: To translate the knowledge gained into realistic scenarios and develop practical solutions.

Materials:

- Case study cards
- Flipcharts or large sheets of paper
- Markers



Instructions:

1 Division into groups: The facilitator divides participants into small groups (about 5 people in each).

2 Distribution of materials: The facilitator distributes to each group a card with a description of one case.

3 Case description: Each group is to read the description and discuss the situation in the context of the LGBT+ knowledge gained.

4 Questions for discussion:

- What problems are presented in the description?
- What actions could be taken to address these issues?
- What support strategies could be used in this situation?
- What consequences (positive or negative) might result from different approaches?

5. presentation of results:

- After the group discussion, each group presents its findings and proposed solutions to the forum.
- Other groups can ask questions and share their comments.

6. Summary: The facilitator summarises the exercise, highlighting key aspects and best practices that emerged during the presentation.

Case descriptions (examples):

I Case: Christopher, an openly gay man, applies for a position as a psychologist in a family therapy centre. His professional experience, academic achievements and numerous references confirm the high quality of his work. During the interview, instead of focusing on the merits, the recruiter starts asking questions that are unrelated to the performance of his duties.

Instead of talking about working methods or therapeutic approaches, the interviewer focuses on Christopher's private life - he starts asking about details of his partnership and even comments that "working with families with conservative values can be difficult for a person like you". These questions, although they may seem subtle, are clearly indicative of a bias against a person representing a sexual minority.



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As a result, despite his excellent qualifications, Christopher's application is rejected. The recruitment decision is not based on an assessment of his competence, but on the assumption that his open declaration of sexual orientation is an obstacle to the effective performance of his tasks in the institution. Such a situation not only deprives the centre of access to a highly competent specialist, but also creates a negative image of an organisation that is unable to manage diversity on an equal basis.

Some questions for discussion:

- What signals during an interview might indicate that discrimination against LGBT+ candidates is taking place? Consider which questions or comments deviate from a substantive assessment of qualifications.
- In your opinion, do questions about a candidate's private life have any bearing on the assessment of his/her professional competence? How should the boundaries between getting to know the candidate and invading his/her privacy be defined?
- How can the organisation safeguard the recruitment process against bias, both conscious and unconscious? What can be implemented (e.g. training for recruiters, interview standards, recruitment forms) to eliminate such situations?
- What might be the long-term consequences for an institution that systematically discriminates against LGBT+ candidates? Reflect on the impact of such practices on the organisation's image, team morale and productivity.
- What action can candidates themselves or external organisations take to counteract discrimination in recruitment? Is it worth reporting such cases to the relevant institutions or using legal tools?
- Should a company's policy on diversity and openness be openly communicated at the job advertisement stage? How could such information affect the recruitment process and the perception of the organisation by potential candidates?

II. The case of

"Marek, a young psychologist with an impressive academic record and solid references from his clinical practice, applies for a position at a renowned therapy centre. Right at the beginning of the interview, the recruiter, instead of asking questions about his working methods and how he handles difficult therapeutic situations, focuses on the aspect of the candidate's young age. Despite Mark detailing numerous successful cases and proving that his cutting-edge approach produces tangible results, the recruiter repeatedly stresses that 'experience comes with age'. During the recruitment process, there are comments suggesting that youth is a hindrance - the recruiter asks, among other things: "Do you think you can handle long-term problems when you are just starting your career?"

Such remarks, while they may appear subtle, clearly indicate bias. By focusing on age and pointing out the paucity of life experience, the recruiter dismisses the candidate's actual qualifications and achievements. Ultimately, despite the proven potential and positive references, the decision to reject Mark's candidature is made on the basis of a subjective assessment that clearly takes into account the youth stereotype.



Some questions for discussion:

- What signals during an interview might suggest that discrimination is taking place? - Do certain questions or comments indicate prejudice and stereotypical expectations of candidates?
- How can substantive questions be distinguished from those that invade a candidate's privacy? - What criteria should be used to ensure that the assessment of candidates is based solely on their qualifications and experience.
- What action should an HR department or recruiter take when they notice that an interview is deviating from the established content standards? - Is it worth putting controls or feedback mechanisms in place to help detect and eliminate inappropriate questions?
- What might be the consequences of discriminatory recruitment practices for organisations? - Can such actions affect a company's image, employee motivation levels or business performance?

Finally, the presenter summarises the issues discussed, highlighting key aspects and best practices.

2. Polish Law and Discrimination in the Workplace (45 min)

Review of current legislation

Legal basis:



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- **The Constitution of the Republic of Poland** The Constitution of the Republic of Poland is the foundation for the protection of civil rights and guarantees the equality of all citizens.
 - **Article 32(2)**: Ensures that all citizens have the right to equal treatment by the public authorities, regardless of differences in inter alia . ethnic, religious or any other personal characteristic.
 - **Article 66(1)**: Guarantees the right to safe and healthy working conditions, which more broadly means that any violation of a worker's dignity - including discrimination - can affect the realisation of this right. These articles emphasise that discrimination in any form, including on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, contradicts the fundamental principles of equality guaranteed by the Constitution.
- **Labour Code** The Labour Code regulates the relationship between employers and employees, setting out the obligations and rights of both parties.
 - It contains provisions on equality in employment, promotion, pay and safe working conditions.
 - In practice, this means that any employment decision should be made solely on the basis of the candidate's qualifications and skills, without taking into account personal characteristics that are not relevant to the job.
- **Equal Treatment Act** This Act regulates in detail issues related to the prohibition of discrimination in various areas of social and professional life.
 - It sets out employers' obligations to prevent both direct and indirect discrimination and introduces mechanisms to protect employees who experience discrimination.
 - The Act also requires special procedures to be followed in recruitment and promotion processes to ensure that employment decisions are fair and based on objective criteria.
- **Scope:** Anti-discrimination standards for employment, promotion, remuneration and working conditions.

Examples of Discrimination

Factual analysis:

- Refusal of promotion on the basis of sexual orientation,



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Imagine a situation in which Marta - a highly qualified educator with a proven track record and excellent performance - applies for a promotion to team leader. Although her track record and credentials clearly demonstrate competence, there are informal comments from her superiors during the decision-making process. During promotion interviews, someone states that 'such people may find it difficult to work with traditional audience segments' or that 'a number of managerial responsibilities require a more conservative approach'. As a result, despite her objective qualifications, Marta is passed over for promotion. This situation illustrates how biases can affect career development decisions when professional judgement is replaced by informal norms about lifestyle or sexual orientation.

- Inappropriate comments or jokes,

Another example concerns Peter, who works as a psychologist in a large institution. During regular team meetings there are jokes and comments from some colleagues suggesting that his open declaration of orientation is 'out of character'. Such statements, although they appear to be jokes, consistently create an atmosphere in which Peter feels isolated. These jokes affect his comfort at work and result in reduced motivation, and may also affect his superiors' assessment of his activities. Here, discrimination takes a subtle form - indirect but regular inappropriate remarks that undermine the sense of belonging within the team.

- Sudden dismissal after disclosure of orientation.

Another scenario concerns a situation in which Tomasz, an openly gay man, works in a training institution. For a long period, his work is evaluated positively and his results are of a high standard. However, after he publicly admits his sexual orientation during a company meeting, he is suddenly dismissed within a few days. The justification given by the employer is vague and all communications indicate that the dismissal had to do with "a change in the philosophy of the department". In this situation, the disclosure of the orientation became the impetus for a decision that is in fact based on prejudice. Such a case illustrates the importance of using objective assessment criteria and how unfair the consequences of workplace discrimination can be.

Discussion: Discussion of possible legal steps and interventions.

The discussion of the above cases should focus on discussing tools and strategies that can prevent such situations or respond effectively when they do occur. Here are some of the directions worth raising during the discussion:

- **Documenting Incidents:** Participants can reflect on the importance of documenting all incidents of inappropriate comments, questions or recruitment decisions. What types of evidence (notes, emails, testimonials from colleagues) can be used to demonstrate discrimination?

- **Reporting Procedures:** What internal mechanisms should be in place so that employees can report incidents of discrimination without fear of repercussions? Is there a need to create or improve an anonymous reporting system within the company?
- **Legal Support:** What legal remedies are available for people who have experienced discrimination in the workplace?
 - Should the employee consult an employment lawyer?
 - Under what circumstances is it worth reporting a case to the State Labour Inspectorate or considering pursuing your rights through the courts?
- **Training and Education of Recruiters:** what forms of training could help recruitment teams focus on substantive assessment criteria while eliminating unconscious bias? Could regular equal treatment training reduce the risk of discrimination?
- **Organisational culture:** How can an openness policy and clear statements of company values contribute to preventing incidents of discrimination? What communication activities, both internally and externally, contribute to building the image of an organisation that is welcoming to all candidates?

3. Practical Benefits of Diversity at Work (45 min)

Introduction to the Diversity Theme

Diversity in the workplace means being present and respectful of the wide range of characteristics that characterise individual employees. In the context of human resource management, this concept encompasses not only obvious aspects such as gender, age or education, but also cultural and ethnic characteristics as well as sexual orientation. Thus, diversity is treated as a set of unique elements that each member of an organisation brings to a shared working environment.

One of the key elements of this approach is the recognition that every employee - regardless of their individuality - has the potential to contribute to the overall innovation and



effectiveness of the organisation. When people with different experiences, perspectives and skills come together in a team, there is a natural ability to solve problems creatively. A diverse group is able to look at challenges from multiple angles, leading to innovative solutions.

Additionally, organisations value diversity because it influences the perception of the company by potential employees and customers. Employers who actively promote a culture of openness and respect are seen as attractive in the labour market. This not only attracts talented candidates, but also improves relationships with audiences - be they students in educational institutions or clients using therapy services. A better understanding of the needs of these groups often comes precisely from the presence of a team with diverse backgrounds, who are better able to empathise with the expectations and realities of their audiences.

The benefits of adopting this approach include:

- A team characterised by diversity is able to generate new, creative ideas and approaches to problem solving.
- Perspectives from different experiences allow for a holistic approach to challenges and more rapid and effective solutions.
- Organisations that promote a culture of openness are more desirable to candidates, which translates into the ability to hire the best talent.
- With diversity in the team, institutions can respond more effectively to the expectations of their customers, students or patients, which has a positive impact on business performance.

Employment of LGBT+ Persons - Recruitment Aspects (30 min)

1. Moderated discussion

Purpose: To discuss the challenges and benefits of employing professionals who have experience of working with LGBT+ people. To enable participants to share how diverse perspectives affect the effectiveness of teams in educational and therapeutic settings.

Mileage:

- Exit questions:
 - What challenges do we face when hiring staff with experience of working with LGBT+ people?
 - How can a professional who is part of the LGBT+ community or has worked with such clients influence the culture and effectiveness of the institution?
 - Is it worth introducing additional criteria for assessing candidates that take into account their experience of working with minorities?



- Discussion moderation:
 - The facilitator guides the conversation, encouraging participants to share examples from their own practice or observations from the labour market.
 - It is important to point out that diversity in employment is not only an ethical aspect, but also a strategic one - it influences innovation and better problem-solving in the institution.

End result: Participants gain a broad perspective on the potential benefits of hiring employees with experience of working with LGBT+ people and identify barriers and possible ways to overcome them.

2. Mini Lecture

Aim: To present research and examples that illustrate how diversity among employed professionals improves the quality of education and therapy.

Lecture content:

- The impact of diversity on the quality of education:
 - Explaining how the presence of staff with diverse backgrounds (including working with LGBT+ people) contributes to a better understanding of the needs of students or mentees.
 - Presentation of examples of institutions that have gained efficiency by employing professionals with broad perspectives.
- The impact of diversity on therapy:
 - Discuss how experience of working with minorities influences better tailoring of therapeutic methods to individual patients' needs.
 - Emphasise that professionals who are open to different identities and experiences can create a safe and accepting environment for their clients.
- Examples and empirical data:
 - Cite specific studies and reports that show the positive impact of diversity on the performance of educational institutions and therapeutic facilities.

End result: Participants receive a solid theoretical basis that confirms that employing people with experience of working with LGBT+ people translates into a higher level of quality in educational and therapeutic services.

3. Exercise: Case Study in Groups



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Purpose: To practice an analysis of the recruitment process and identify potential improvements that can help eliminate discriminatory hiring practices.

Mileage:

- **Division into groups:** Participants are divided into small teams (e.g. 4-5 people).
- **Task:** Each group is given a case study - a description of a recruitment situation in which elements of discrimination against LGBT+ candidates appear. The example could be of a situation where a candidate with experience of working with LGBT+ people is assessed solely in terms of their private life or certain stereotypical expectations.
- **Analysis:** Groups are to analyse the recruitment process, identify where mistakes occurred and propose specific improvements.
 - What elements of the process should be modified so that the assessment of candidates is based solely on their qualifications and experience?
 - What training or procedures can we put in place so that recruiters are better prepared to conduct interviews on merit?
- **Presentation:** Each group presents its findings and proposed changes. The facilitator moderates the discussion, highlighting key issues and good practices.

End result: Participants acquire the ability to identify potential gaps in the recruitment process and practical tips for implementing effective solutions. The results of the exercise can serve as a basis for developing recruitment standards in the institution.

4. Good Practice in the Employment of LGBT People (45 min)

Recruitment Strategies and Diversity Management

I. Job advertisements

Use of gender-neutral language. In the recruitment process, it is crucial that job advertisements are formulated in language that is free of stereotypes and prejudices. This means:



- Language neutrality: avoid phrases and terms that could marginalise or exclude candidates from certain groups. For example, instead of 'we are looking for a dynamic young employee', it is better to use the phrase 'we are looking for an energetic person with a passion for professional development'.
- Emphasise a policy of openness: The advert should clearly emphasise that the company values diversity and equality, giving potential candidates confidence that their abilities and experience will be assessed solely on merit. A section can be added about the fact that the company is supportive of all people - regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics - and aims to create an environment free of prejudice.

The benefits of this approach:

- It enables a wide range of talent to be attracted and feel accepted.
- It builds a positive employer image, which can influence a company's better reputation in the labour market.
- It ensures that the recruitment process is transparent and free of subjective bias, resulting in a high level of evaluation of candidates.

II. Active Search for Candidates

Working with organisations that support LGBT+ people. Organisations that advocate for LGBT+ people offer excellent opportunities to reach out to candidates who have a wealth of professional experience and often also valuable interpersonal skills. In practice, this means:

- Partnering with professional organisations and associations: Establish relationships with institutions and foundations that support LGBT+ people and participate in their events, job fairs or conferences. This allows the company to gain direct access to a group of candidates who are not only competent but also aware of their rights and values.
- Recruitment campaigns targeting the LGBT+ community: As part of your marketing efforts, it is worth creating dedicated campaigns that highlight your company's openness, equal treatment policy and commitment to building diversity-based teams.
- Use of social channels: Platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram allow you to publish content specifically aimed at LGBT+ people, and also allow you to advertise jobs to specific groups or communities.



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The benefits of actively seeking candidates:

- Attracting candidates with unique experiences who bring freshness and new perspectives to the organisation.
- Increase the chance to build a team that can better understand the needs of the audience - whether students, patients or clients - through a diversity of work and life experiences.
- Strengthen the company's image as an open and modern organisation that values diversity and actively promotes equality.

Examples from companies

Discuss good practices of Polish companies (e.g. Santander Bank Polska, ING Bank Śląski, PZU Group) and international companies (e.g. Google, IKEA, Nike) in implementing equality and acceptance policies.

Santander Bank Polska Santander Bank Polska is an example of an institution that consistently promotes the values of equality and respect for diversity. In practice, this bank:

- It introduces training programmes for its employees, focusing on anti-bias issues and building a culture of acceptance.
- It promotes a policy of equal treatment in recruitment processes, ensuring that job advertisements and criteria for assessing candidates are free from stereotypical wording and discriminatory judging.
- It implements initiatives to integrate teams, including mentoring programmes and company events that allow direct contact between employees from different backgrounds.

ING Bank Śląski ING Bank Śląski applies multifaceted measures to build a working environment based on openness and equality. Among the practices implemented by the bank, we can highlight:

- Targeted executive training to help managers recognise unconscious biases and build teams that are diverse in terms of gender, age, background and sexual orientation.
- A clearly articulated equality policy aimed not only at recruitment but also at ensuring that every employee has equal opportunities for career development.



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- A proactive approach to communication - both internally and externally. Communicating the programmes implemented and documenting the results of activities creates an additional incentive to maintain high standards.

PZU Group The PZU Group is committed to creating a workplace where diversity is seen as an asset. Examples of activities include:

- Implement comprehensive equal treatment policies covering all stages of employment - from recruitment to promotion processes to the remuneration system.
- Monitoring and measuring the effects of implemented policies - collecting surveys and internal reports to help assess whether the implementation of equality policies is impacting correctly on the organisational culture.
- Collaborating with external experts and organisations that specialise in the field of diversity to systematically improve internal standards and procedures.

Examples of Internships in International Companies

Google Google is one of the leaders in diversity management. The company is known for:

- Publish regular diversity reports to transparently assess progress and identify areas for improvement.
- A wide range of in-house initiatives - from conferences and workshops promoting openness to support programmes for employees from minority groups, including LGBT+ people.
- Creating a culture where every employee has the opportunity to influence their working environment and where space design, communication and appraisal systems are based on principles of equality and fairness.

IKEA IKEA emphasises the importance of openness and equality, which is reflected in its global HR policies. The company takes the following actions:

- It develops and implements procedures that allow each employee to freely express his or her identity and to use name or pronoun preferences.
- It creates a working environment where diversity is valued not only symbolically, but also practically - through organisational support for different employee groups, including dedicated initiatives for LGBT+ employees.
- It initiates social campaigns to promote inclusivity, which reinforces its image as a company that cares about equality on a global scale.

Nike Nike is overtly committed to promoting gender equality and activities that support LGBT+ people. Their best practices include:



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- Implementation of promotional campaigns aimed not only at selling products but also at creating public awareness of equality and diversity. The company sponsors and participates in Pride events.
- Implement professional development programmes that are tailored to the needs of employees with diverse life experiences, enabling them to fully develop their careers regardless of identity.
- Creating organisational cultures with a high value for diversity, where every employee feels important and innovation is seen as a result of a diversity of perspectives and experiences.

5. Gender Identity Sensitive Recruitment - What to Avoid? (45 min)

Avoiding Discrimination in the Recruitment Process

I. Knowledge of Anti-Discrimination Laws

- Up-to-date Knowledge of the Law: Recruiters, HR managers and those involved in the selection process need to be up to date with current legislation such as the Polish Constitution, the Labour Code and the Equal Treatment Act. Knowledge of these standards enables:
 - Awareness of which criteria are acceptable when assessing candidates.
 - Avoiding legal violations, by the example of questions or expectations that could be interpreted as prejudice.
- Training and Competence Enhancement: Regular training for recruitment teams is necessary to make them aware of the importance of anti-discrimination. This training should include:
 - Examples of unwarranted questions and comments that may lead to a breach of equal treatment.
 - Case study illustrating the consequences of discrimination for candidates and organisations.
- Implement Internal Standards and Policies: Companies should develop and implement internal bylaws that clarify policies for evaluating candidates and procedures for dealing with reports of inappropriate behaviour by recruiters.

II. Transparency of the Recruitment Criteria

- **Clarity and Precise Advertisements:** Job advertisements should be created using neutral language, with clear requirements and expectations. Key elements include:
 - A list of requirements and qualifications, based solely on skills, experience and professional performance.
 - Information on the company's policy on equal treatment and that all applications are assessed against established, merit-based criteria.
- **Documentation of the Recruitment Process:** In order to avoid subjective assessments, it is important that each step of the process is thoroughly documented. Transparency of the process includes:
 - An inventory of evaluation criteria that is available to all participants in the recruitment process.
 - Establish standard questions and interview procedures to help eliminate potential biases.
- **Monitoring and Auditing:** regular auditing of recruitment processes allows you to verify that the criteria used comply with the equal treatment policy. This makes it possible to:
 - Ensure that recruitment decisions are based on objective considerations.
 - Identify areas for improvement and implement appropriate adjustments.

The Most Common Errors and How to Eliminate Them

Unconscious errors can occur in the recruitment process that make it difficult to objectively assess candidates. Among the most common are:

- Often, recruiters guess what pronouns a candidate should use, rather than asking the candidate directly. Such assumptions can lead to misinterpretation of identity and misperception of the person.
- These questions have nothing to do with the candidate's competences and may invade the candidate's privacy. Asking such questions introduces unnecessary prejudice and may be seen as a form of discrimination.

To eliminate these errors, it is recommended that the following solutions be implemented:

- Conduct regular training sessions on anti-discrimination and how to conduct objective interviews. These trainings help to make recruiters aware of the existence of unconscious biases and teach which questions are substantive and which ones violate



candidates' privacy.

- Standardised recruitment forms, in which candidates can define for themselves how they prefer to be addressed, help to avoid errors resulting from a recruiter's guesswork. This approach enables each person to present their identity in a way that best suits their individual needs.

Exercise: Simulating a Recruitment Interview

- I. Running of the exercise: Participants are divided into small groups of usually 3-4 people. Each group is given a prepared interview scenario in which the main aspect is to include sensitivity to the gender identity of the candidates. Special situations may arise in the scenario, for example:
 - The candidate introduces themselves by stating their chosen preferred pronouns or the way they would like to be addressed.
 - The recruiter plays the role of the interviewer, tasked with asking questions about qualifications, experience and working methods, but at the same time showing sensitivity to the individual needs of the candidate.
 - An observer in the group notes the behaviour of both parties, noting whether the questions are asked in a neutral way and adapted to the candidate's preferences, or whether they may create unnecessary biases.

Each group has a set amount of time (for example, 10-15 minutes) to run the simulation. After the simulation, each group proceeds to a short feedback session. Participants share their impressions, discuss situations where openness and respect were successfully maintained, and identify moments that might need improvement.

- II. Purpose of the exercise: The main objective of this simulation is to develop practical skills to conduct interviews in an open, friendly and respectful manner towards candidates, regardless of their gender identity. The exercise allows you to:
 - Developing the interpersonal skills of recruiters so that they are able to ask questions solely on the basis of factual criteria, avoiding privacy-invasive questions.
 - Develop an interview methodology that allows candidates to freely present their identity and expectations of how they want to be addressed.

- Understand and realise the importance of a recruitment process based on transparent criteria, thus eliminating unconscious biases.
- Creating a safe space to practice communication techniques and give and receive constructive feedback, which translates into improving the quality of the entire recruitment process.

6. How to be an Open and Diversity Friendly Employer? (45 min)

Creating a Working Environment based on Openness and Mutual Respect

In order to create an atmosphere in which every employee feels valued and the team functions on the basis of mutual respect and openness, organisations should take specific measures, including:

- **Regular diversity training:** Implementing regular training allows employees to keep up to date on the various aspects of organisational culture, different perspectives and the challenges of working in a multi-faceted environment. Through such training, participants learn how to recognise unconscious biases and how to communicate in a way that supports equality. This learning tool not only raises awareness, but also develops interpersonal skills, strengthening communication and relationship building within the team.
- **Organising support groups:** Initiatives such as support teams (affinity groups) enable employees with similar backgrounds or identities to meet and share experiences. Such groups act as a space where everyone can share their difficulties, successes and ideas without fear of external evaluation. Support groups build a sense of belonging and enable mutual help, which translates into stronger bonds between employees and better integration of the whole organisation.
- **Mentoring programmes:** mentoring is a tool that enables the transfer of knowledge and experience between more experienced employees and younger colleagues. By introducing mentoring programmes, the organisation enables professional development based on the individual needs of the participants. Mentoring also helps to build relationships based on trust and support, resulting in more stable and committed teams. Such a system not only fosters upskilling, but also reinforces a work culture in which everyone has the opportunity to develop and is valued for their unique skills.



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Implementing Policies and Procedures to Support Diversity

Implementing policies and procedures to support diversity is a comprehensive process that aims to create a working environment that is free of discrimination and conducive to the full realisation of each employee's potential. In practice, such a process involves several key activities.

The first step is to develop and implement strict anti-discrimination policies that clearly define what behaviour is unacceptable and then establish procedures for reporting violations in a way that is transparent and accessible to all employees. This ensures that anyone who notices irregularities has the opportunity to report them without fear of repercussions. Equally important is the alignment of all internal documents - from bylaws to internal forms to corporate communications - with the principles of gender neutrality. Such standardisation helps to eliminate language or wording that could inadvertently marginalise or exclude employees of diverse identities.

Another important aspect is support for transgender and non-binary people. Organisations that want to effectively implement equality policies often take practical steps to adapt spaces and working conditions to the needs of these groups. An example of such measures is providing access to gender-neutral toilets, which allows people whose gender identity does not fit into traditional models to feel comfortable and safe. In addition, flexible working hours allow employees to tailor their schedules to their individual needs, which is particularly important in the context of people who may require additional adjustments due to the need for specialised medical care or transition support.

Discussion Panel

The purpose of the panel discussion is to enable experts and participants to jointly discuss practical solutions and actions that enhance a culture of equality in organisations in a real way. The discussion is intended not only to share experiences and best practices, but also to enable a constructive search for ways to practically implement the idea of equal treatment in everyday work processes.

The Course of the Panel:



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- **Introduction:** The presenter introduces the purpose and topic of the panel, presenting the main issues to be addressed. Brief presentation by experts (e.g. HR representatives, managers and external consultants) and information on the role of participants in the discussion.
- **Presentation of Examples:** Experts share their experiences and examples of activities they have managed to implement or observe in their organisations. Examples may include the implementation of equality policies, training or inclusive initiatives that have contributed to building an open work culture.
- **Opening the Discussion:** The facilitator asks open questions such as:
 - What specific actions have been most successful in building an equality culture in your organisation?
 - What challenges have you encountered in implementing equality policies?
 - Has the use of specific tools (e.g. anonymous feedback, training, support groups) yielded the expected results?
- **Interaction and Exchange of Experiences:** Participants have the opportunity to ask questions of the experts, comment on the examples presented and share their own observations. The moderator ensures that the discussion is constructive and focused on practical solutions.
- **Summary and Recommendations:** At the end of the panel, the experts jointly formulate key conclusions and recommendations that can be used by the participants as a guide to implement policies and procedures to strengthen an equality culture in their own organisations.

Through this form of discussion, participants:

- They get practical tips and strategies that they can immediately apply in their working environments.
- They gain a better understanding of how a variety of initiatives - from training to changes in internal documentation to the creation of support groups - translate into a more open and equal organisational culture.
- They have the opportunity to ask questions and express their own insights, which fosters a community based on mutual support and knowledge sharing.

7. The legitimacy of creating an inclusive organisation for transgender (and non-binary) people (45 min)



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The importance of openness towards transgender and non-binary people

Openness towards transgender and non-binary people is fundamental to building a working environment where everyone feels accepted and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. The specifics of their needs and the impact of appropriate support on mental health, work comfort and professional performance are discussed below.

Specificity of needs:

- Transgender and non-binary people often struggle to hide their true identity due to fear of discrimination. The openness of organisations allows them to express themselves freely, which is important for their sense of authenticity and safety.
- Many workers in transition need specialist support - both medical and psychological. Access to resources such as consultation with experts, peer support or flexible working arrangements allows them to go through this stage with minimal stress.
- Specific needs of transgender and non-binary people may include the need to use gender-neutral toilets, changing details on internal documents, or flexibility in work schedules. Such adjustments help to build an environment where each employee feels that they are treated with full respect and understanding.

The impact of support on mental health, work comfort and productivity:

- When employees are confident that their identity is accepted, they experience less stress and reduced emotional tension. This has a positive impact on their mental health, which translates into better concentration, lower absenteeism and overall job satisfaction.
- An atmosphere of openness and support enables a space where employees are free to be themselves. Greater comfort in the workplace leads to better communication between team members and builds a sense of community and belonging.
- Employees who feel respected and accepted are more motivated and committed to their duties. An increased sense of security translates into higher productivity and creativity, which supports the development of the entire organisation.

Practical actions:

- Organisations should create detailed, written equality and anti-discrimination policies that include procedures for reporting violations. Such documents should be available



to all employees, which builds transparency and trust.

- The provision of gender-neutral toilets, flexible working hours and the possibility to update personal information (e.g. name, pronouns) are concrete measures that help to adapt working conditions to the needs of transgender and non-binary people.
- Implementing regular diversity training and awareness campaigns improves awareness among employees. This education changes attitudes, reduces prejudice and creates a culture where support and acceptance are a natural part of everyday work.

Examples of supporting organisations

Case presentation of companies (e.g. IBM, Accenture, Google) that have implemented comprehensive support programmes.

IBM

IBM has been a pioneer in diversity management for years. This company focuses on creating a work environment where every person - regardless of gender, age, background or identity - has an equal opportunity to thrive. IBM's key activities include:

- **Employee support programmes:** IBM organises numerous initiatives focused on supporting employees from different groups, including LGBT+ people, by launching support networks such as IBM Pride. These internal groups enable employees to meet, share experiences and access mentoring and training.
- **Training and development:** The company regularly provides anti-discrimination training to raise awareness among employees about unconscious biases and promote the value of diversity. Through this, IBM ensures that managers and teams are able to effectively harness the digital and creative potential that comes from diverse perspectives.
- **Transparent equality policies:** IBM not only implements anti-discrimination policies, but also proactively publishes diversity data across its teams, allowing it to assess progress on an ongoing basis and identify areas for further action.

Accenture

Accenture is another example of an organisation that has set its sights on implementing a comprehensive diversity and inclusion strategy. In its global strategy, the company focuses on:

- **Creating a supportive environment for all:** Accenture provides mentoring programmes, training and dedicated Employee Resource Groups for employees from



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minority communities, including LGBT+ people. This enables employees to share experiences and receive both professional and personal support.

- **Recruitment and talent development:** The company places a high priority on recruiting candidates from diverse backgrounds and actively collaborates with NGOs and associations supporting LGBT+ people. This enables Accenture to attract unique talent that influences the innovation of its teams.
- **Transparency and reporting:** Accenture regularly publishes reports on innovation, diversity and inclusivity, which is an important part of building trust within the organisation and externally with potential candidates and clients.

Google

Google is widely recognised as a leader in terms of creating an open and welcoming environment where diversity is not only accepted but also celebrated. Key elements of support programmes at Google include:

- **Initiatives for employees:** Google has numerous resources dedicated to sexual minority employees and creates spaces where they can express themselves freely. Groups such as Google Pride allow support networks to be built and experiences to be shared.
- **Policies and procedures to support diversity:** The employer ensures that all internal documents, communications and appraisal systems comply with the principles of equality and neutrality. For example, Google has procedures in place to allow employees to determine their own preference for names or pronouns.
- **Education and transparency:** the company publishes annual equality and diversity reports, which allows progress to be monitored and areas for improvement to be identified. Regular training and workshops enable employees to understand the importance of openness and mutual respect.

Workshop: Creating a plan for a diversity-supportive organisation

Translate the knowledge gained into concrete solutions tailored to the institution by developing a comprehensive, measurable action plan that includes assessing the current situation, setting short-term and long-term goals, identifying specific steps and establishing a timeline for implementation.

Proceedings of the Workshop:



1. Division into small groups: Participants are divided into teams of 4-6 people so that everyone has a chance to actively participate in the planning process.
2. Assessment of the current situation (Current State Analysis):
 - Each group starts its work by carefully diagnosing the situation in its organisation.
 - As part of this analysis, groups are asked to identify:
 - What policies, procedures and actions to support diversity are already in place?
 - What areas need improvement or completion in terms of equal treatment and openness?
 - What barriers (e.g. cultural, procedural) currently exist?
 - At this stage, it is useful to use supporting questions such as:
 - "What works well and contributes to a supportive environment?"
 - "What aspects of organisational culture may influence the exclusion of certain groups of employees?"
3. Goal setting:
 - Short-term objectives:
 - Define actions that can be implemented in the next 3-6 months, e.g. conducting anti-discrimination training, updating recruitment policies, setting up support groups.
 - Long-term objectives:
 - Set strategic goals for a period of 1-3 years, such as changing the organisational culture, implementing ongoing mentoring programmes, systematic monitoring of diversity activities and continuous improvement initiatives for internal policies.
4. Develop specific action steps:
 - Each group prepares a list of activities that will lead to the achievement of the set goals.
 - These activities may include:
 - Development and implementation of anti-discrimination bylaws.

- Modification of internal documents to comply with the principles of gender neutrality.
 - Initiatives to promote diversity, such as the organisation of integration meetings, workshops or open days.
 - Liaise with external organisations supporting diversity.
5. Establish a timetable for implementation:
- Each group establishes a realistic time plan, specifying which activities are to be undertaken at what times.
 - Responsible persons or teams are also identified to monitor the progress of the various milestones.
6. Presentation of plans and feedback:
- Each group presents its plan in front of the whole group or panels of experts.
 - A feedback session follows, during which participants and experts can offer additional suggestions, point out possible gaps or confirm the relevance of the solutions presented.

Benefits of the Workshop:

- Participants translate the theoretical underpinnings and information learned into concrete, measurable actions tailored to the specific characteristics of their organisation.
- Working in small groups allows the plan to be tailored to the real needs and capacities of the institution, increasing the chances of successful implementation of change.
- The workshop develops the ability to analyse situations, systematically set goals and develop effective implementation strategies, which is valuable not only in the field of diversity but also in other areas of organisational management.
- Sharing experiences and working collectively on solutions fosters a shared vision and mutual support, which translates into a better organisational culture.

7. Developing Allied Attitudes towards LGBT+ People (30 min)

Definition and Role of Allies



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An ally is a person who is not part of the LGBT+ community, but nevertheless takes active steps to promote equal treatment and dignity for LGBT+ people. An ally engages in anti-discrimination efforts, supports people in the community and strives to create an environment where everyone can feel accepted and respected.

Key aspects of the role of an ally

1. Actively promoting equality

- An ally does not remain passive in the face of irregularities or manifestations of discrimination. Its task is to openly show support at every level - both personally and professionally.
- Fostering also means promoting behaviours that reinforce an inclusive culture, as well as seeking to educate and build awareness about the importance of diversity.

2. Responding to cases of discrimination

- When an ally notices a discriminatory situation (e.g. inappropriate comments, exclusionary decisions or unwarranted questions), they should proactively intervene. This may mean gently steering the conversation to a more substantive track or reporting the situation to relevant internal bodies such as HR or supervisors.
- An ally should support potential victims of discrimination by offering assistance, listening to their experiences, and suggesting what steps they can take to protect their rights. This support can take the form of both moral and practical engagement.
- A person in an ally role engages not only in responding to incidents, but also in educating themselves and others. This allows for a better understanding of the specific issues faced by LGBT+ people and raises awareness of how small, unconscious biases can lead to serious violations of dignity and equality.

3. Developing a positive organisational culture

- The ally plays a key role in building a mutually respectful and inclusive working environment. The ally's actions help to create an atmosphere in which both parties - those from minority groups and those outside these groups - feel a sense of responsibility for the common good and equal treatment.



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- Promoting the values of openness and respect can take many forms, from supporting inclusive initiatives to participating in support groups to initiating and attending anti-discrimination training.

Practical Support Measures

Implementing measures to support diversity in the workplace requires daily, consistent steps that build positive behaviour patterns and create an environment where every employee feels safe and respected. Here are some practical ways to support.

Creating a safe space

- Ensuring that the workplace is free from prejudice and inappropriate comments. This may include implementing clear anti-discrimination bylaws and systems for anonymous reporting of violations.
- Establishing dedicated affinity groups and holding regular meetings where employees can freely share experiences and receive support. Such initiatives help build a sense of belonging and a safe place to express their own identities.
- Introduce changes to the physical workspace, such as gender-neutral toilets or flexible working hours, to take into account the specific needs of people from different groups, including transgender and non-binary people.

Educating colleagues

- Organise regular diversity training sessions to show how to counter unconscious biases and practical workshops to help communicate about sensitive topics.
- Provide employees with brochures, articles, webinars or educational videos that help them understand the importance of equality and openness and contribute to building empathy and engagement.
- Running internal campaigns to promote the values of inclusivity and equal treatment, so that everyone feels part of an organisation that cares about all groups of employees.

Responding to inappropriate comments

- In situations where inappropriate comments or behaviour occurs, it is important to respond in a timely manner. This can range from direct intervention by witnesses to reporting the matter to the relevant departments (e.g. HR) who will take further



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action.

- Implement habits and procedures that allow incidents to be reported confidentially and without fear of negative consequences. This ensures that employees feel their voice is heard and problems are taken seriously.
- Offer direct support to people who have been victims of of discriminatory speech; this can range from emotional support to assistance with formal reporting of incidents.

Promoting positive patterns of behaviour

- Managers and leaders should demonstrate respectful and open attitudes on a daily basis, which has a positive impact on the whole organisation. Their daily actions and decisions translate into shaping the organisational culture.
- Systematically recognise and reward attitudes that promote equality and inclusivity. This may include praise, commendations or other forms of recognition that encourage employees to adopt and promote positive patterns of behaviour.
- Maintaining open communication through internal newsletters, team meetings or communication platforms that regularly remind people of the organisation's values and promote examples of good practice.

8. Summary and Question and Answer Session (15 min)

Summary: Discussion of the main conclusions of the workshop and key good practices.

Question and answer session: Participants can ask questions and share reflections.

Evaluation: Completion of questionnaires (pre- and post-training), evaluation forms, application forms and completion of attendance list.

Concluding remarks

The outline has been adapted to the specificities of institutions employing psychologists and educators working with LGBT+ people. The workshop will place particular emphasis on the practical aspects of implementing anti-discrimination policies and building a working environment based on openness and mutual respect. The presenters have the possibility to modify the schedule and exercises according to the needs of the participants.



Additional information

Depending on the specific nature of the institution:

Additional materials: case studies, examples of good practice from other organisations and a set of discussion questions.

Option of individual consultation or follow-up after the workshop.



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